The epistle of one

frend to another, of a strange fyre that was sene in the aire both longe and brode almost through al Germany, and what as well the godly as the vngodly maye or ought therof to loke for or feare.

MY due salutations remembred right worshipfull brother, thys shalbe to let you vnderstande that in the beginning of the yere of our lord. M.D.LXJ. wherein we are nowe, the thirde after the feast of the birth of Christ, that is on childermas day: there appeared ouer our citie and all the borders of Swicerlande, two houres afore day the aire beyng clear a very red fyre, in maner whole together, but that white furrowes or strakes came betwene, and it stretched out longe and brode almost a furlong brode, although in another place it semed narower, but in lengthe three or foure times so muche. So that vnto

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All the beholders in maner a whole mile long towardes ỹ North it semed that some village or many, or els som towne had bene on a great fyre. And in many places the neighbours ran together as it were to quench the fire of some of their neighbours: and ther wer which thought that thei saw in this fyre of bloudy colour mani white forowes or strakes, very like vnto bundels of speares. But it continued not longe in one place, but remoued many furlonges further, and when it was day or rather towarde e'ye, by litle and litle it vanished out of sight being first gathered together at San gallie in maner of a great tower.

By this ye may easly coniecture that this fyre was on the higher parte of the aire, because it was sene so far of, and almost folowed the mouinge of the aire, & yet not on ỹ highest aire ỹ there like vnto the comets or blasing starres might be kindeled by the element of fire. And this was also faithfully shewed vs, that it was so seen at Zurich, Glaroua, Sãgale, Constãce and euery where round about ỹ lake

of

of Aezon, and Venice, and so likewise at Basill, and in the most part of the places of Swicerland, and the Recians or Grisons. But whether it were sene any further we shall know shortly. And in certain places betwene Surick and the litle towne Elgia thei say that flames of fire fel down to the grounde and amased therewith a certaine man that traueiled by the way.

And a certaine credible man of the teritorie of Surike tolde me all the matter, which he did diligently mark.

Fyrst, when the night was cleare, and yet ear it was day it became darker, euen in the setting of the moone it semed vnto him as it wer a certain light to rise from the earth as if diuers beames and of sundrie colours (as when the Sunne by the droppes of raine maketh diuers colours) shuld so by and by arise from the ground as it wer drawen vp toward heauen, and there gathered a rednes as though a certaine cloude had wared red, & stode so a lytle while, and anone after a certaine cloud went through the middest thereof, and then was seene a shuting

out of fyre as it had bene starres oute of a burning cloude.

The signification of thys wonderfull matter, righte learned syr, which I haue studied vpō to exercise my self withall, & to styre vp my minde to ꝑ author of it, I write vnto you therefore that I may hear your iudgement vpon the same which I much esteme.

The signification of the wonder.

1 For as much as such prodigious wonders chaunce seldom in thys our time, and olde men far stryken in age can not remembre to haue sene anye such, therfore it is to be feared & loked for some vnacustomed hap to folowe.

2 The bredeth and bignes of it was notable, through which it was sene euery where long and brode, and as it were euery where nere hand, wher of we diuine and pronunce a greate euyll to folowe, and that not to one region alone, and therin al men to be perplered and doutfull, to what place they maye chiefely goe, and where they may resist the ragyng fyre.

The

3 The colour of the fyre it selfe like to bloode what betokeneth it but warre: In whiche the lande shall abounde in the blood of the slaine and all thinges wasted with fyre.

4 And thys calamitie is chiefelye threatened to those people to whome so euer thys wonder was seane nearest.

5 And because it apeared before day lyght and of a sodeyne & vnlooked for and in maner to al persons as yet sleepyng, therfore it betokeneth the calamities approchynge to be looked for to come vpon manye not thynkynge nor preparyng them selues, or repenting, and ouer careleste in themselues and not only such particular calamities to come, but shortly an vphoped iudgement of the whole worlde.

6 And that within a shorte time after this: because this burning of the aire was seane euery where as it had bene present & nere as I haue sayde.

7 And because it endured but a shorte tyme, therefore it maketh vs hope that the persecution shall not continue longe.

8 And because by and by after it being vanished away the Sunne arose, we hope the cleare light of the wurde of god to be the end of all persecution.

9 And that rednes was not al whole together, but deuided as it were with certaine cleare and bright spaces or furrowes by the which also starres appeared, that signifieth, that in the midest of those calamities and persecutions God wil comfort his elect, and in that fire shall issue out the heauenlye brightnes of the gospell.

10 And now seing this wonder was sene in the beginning of the yere, therfore shal we doute whether this calamitie shall indure a whole yere? For nowe also great mocions do begin to come furth, and thei wil come further except god turne awaye great euils, or rather dare we hope because it appeared by 8 by after the birth of christ that is the thirde day after, within so many yeres hence, that our lorde Iesus Christes doctrine wilbe setfurth farre and brod and as it were restored againe all falshod being expulsed and so the godly to loke for to beginne

gynne a newe yere and a new kynde of lyuynge.

11. And because that bloudy fyre appeared on childermas daye we do not dout but that he which was somtime a reuenger of the bloode of the innocent childzen will now also become a reuenger and punisher foz those godly and faithful men, which haue suffered persecutiõ and death foz his name sake. And foz them whiche as yet remain he wyl be a defender and maintener, so that finallye they wyll acknowledge him to be a father of their cause, and by amendment of life answere therunto and pzepare them selues with pzaier and sobzietie foz the grace that is to come.

12. The shuting of starres as it were the falling of them do doutles signifie vnto vs, that the day of the great iudgement is at hande. A litle befoze the which day that such fozewarning signes shoulde be seene our Lozd Chzist hath warned vs afoze hande longe a goe.

But in no age at anye time hath ther be sene so many and so great and

straunge wonderous sygnes euerye wher abroad as within these fewe yeres: that we ogbt altogether already to consider that it is by tokens signified vnto vs that the latter day is not farre of, and both by other wonders & chiefly by this which is not perticuler nor terrestriall but almost vniuersall and celistiall excepte we vtterly slepe with ouermuch carelesnes and securitie. But first must that Babilonicall beast beyng stuffed with the bloode of saincts and yet not filled nor satisfied be cast downe, and the sincere gospell preached agayne through the whole worlde. The which that it maye very shortly come to passe we shal pray vnto the almightye gracious and great God by our lorde Jesus Christe in the holy Gost.

And yet therfore we ogbt not to promise a careless securitie to our selues that the kingdō of the prince of Christes enemies shall decaye and fal: but excepte we doe throughly take hede to oure selues by and by wyth amendement of lyfe, and ceasse to bragge of a vaine faith, beyng our selues instru-

ted

ted and furnished with no good wor-
kes, we shall firste be punished by the
same. For seynge oure lyfe of all in
maner for the moste parte answe-
reth not to oure profession we haue
manye wayes deserued moste gre-
uous punishmentes: and more tru-
ly then our aduersaries, for this cause
that in so great lyghte of the knowen
truth, we be kyndled or moued wyth
no feruencye of syncere religion but
wallowe and are wrapped in all kind
of vices and wyll almoste suffer no
disciplyne eyther private or publyke:
And for the moste parte all Magistra-
tes wyll not onelye haue Dominion
in the commune wealthe and in Ci-
tyes, but they also wyll haue rule in
the church, but they will not commyt
them selues to the common discipline
of the same.

Finally, the pastors and ministers
of the churches for the most parte be
full of ambition, couetousnes, wan-
tonnes, and other vices, & be no bet-
ter than those whome they ought to
teache and feede wyth the worde of
GOD, but rather much worse.

Where-

Wherfore it is greatly to be feared ꝑ nere the day of the lord draweth vpon vs, and that to vs that ware so colde shalbe moued and not to a fewe of vs and ꝓiuatly as hath bene hertofore, but a common publike and vniuersal sore of persecution wherwith we shal be warned more then inough: for frō the aduersaries of Christs church and his membres (except God tourne it away) shal go out the fyre which hath bene of longe time ꝓpared for vs, & from Italie vnto vs and towarde the North (ꝑ which way ꝑ wonder & prodegious forwarning did incline) shall it come furiously vpon the christians. Notwithstanding we hope and humbly praye vnto the most gracious and mighty god the father of our lord Iesus Christ with lowly and deuot hartes, that this euell may sone after be turned from vs: not for vs but for his name sake, and the holy worshippers of his annoynted. For the bloode of those which longe ago alreadye hathe bene moste abundantly spylled & shed or consumed with fyre throughout al Germany, Fraunce, Italy, Spaine, and

and other regions (by that seuen headed and horned and bloudy Babilonical beast with whome the kinges and princes of the earth haue committed and do commit fornication) may now seme altogether to haue burste out of the bowels of the earth wyth a flamynge brightnes, and that the same burnyng in the ayre betokening a reuenging from the Lord (which is the defender and reuenger of hys) hathe mingled together: That al men may see and vnderstande the euident cause of this wonderful forwarning. Therfore god wil punish together his whō he loueth that they may be amended, and wyth them or at the least by and by after the enemies of his name which go forward obstinatly in their malice, and in the persecution of the saincts. It becometh vs to acknowledge our fauts and to aske forgiuenes and not to despaire by and by at the firste cruell assaute of Antichrist whatsoeuer they be. For he sayth that he is in danger and assauted himself and that on euery side is great fallyng aways frō him, & lest he shulde vtterly be for-

saken

saken he proueth al thinges to the extremitie. We yf we wyll continue in the sincere calling vpon the Lord and remēbre to kepe our selfes in prosperitie, so many as god wil haue kept safe from these calamities shall proue and see a happy successe and spreadyng abrode of the gospell, through out the whole worlde: and the ruine and decaye of that prince or ruler which vnder the tytle of the name of Christe is against him being now of late begon wholy to be performed. For this enterprise of his as it is to be thought to be the greatest so is it to be supposed that it shalbe the laste: and as he did seuer this wonder from the daye that was commyng, euen so it is to be hoped that at the cleare preaching of the Gospel and the last iudgement shortly comming vpon it, al euil shal haue an ende. So we for our selues ought for to gesse well with good and valiant mindes. For the almyghtye can if he wil deliuer vs from all calamities, at the least if he do not those are happy ones which die strongly in the confession of his name for Christ

and

and the truth. But vnhappy are they whosoeuer thynke them selues conquerours agaynst Christ.

That prodigies or wonders be done or styrred vp by god, contrary to the sayings of the Epicures.

ARistotle in his fyrst boke of celestiall speculation and. v. chapter, in mencionyng of other thynges which he calleth fyrye speculations, writeth thus. There be sene sometimes in the night the aire being clear many appearinges (he calleth them horrible sightes) to mete in the ayre. As be gappyngs pittes bloody colours the cause whereof is euen the same, which is of the other aforesaide. But next before he had sayd that of a certaine vapour or exaltation that is whot & drie kindled in the hygh aire be made both certaine other speculations, as beames, Goates, blasyng starres, and also that which is called Thlora, that is a flame or burning: and he sayeth yt that vapour be kindled & shut forth it self wide and brode, it semeth

meth oftētimes to burne like a flame as strawe when it is kyndled in the felde. &c. Of vapours truly (by the opinion of the sayde Philopher) which be sene in ẏ high aire in the cleare nightes, some in dede burne and that longe time, as blasyng starres: some a shorte time, as flames torches, goates, shutyng starres. Some other appeare to be somwhat that thei be not and they may properly be called horrible syghtes: as cloudes somewh. cleare of colour, but chiefelye red of colour and purple or bloudy: for other colours can scantly appeare, namely such as arise by ẏ reflection of beames or such as by cōmirion be white & fiery. Likwise such as be called gapings or pitres. &c. And there be also which thinke that there be suche colours in dede. And it mai be thought that somtyme bloodye cloudes be in dede and sometyme do apeare so. For we haue red often that ther hath rained blood and sometime that it only appeareth so, by the reflerion of the light. Truly it is not to be douted but that both ther be and also appeareth or semeth a bloody

a bloody colour of burnyng in ỹ night and of flames, chiefely seyng the flame or the inflamed matter and substaunce so thicke. And perchaunce more in the winter when vapours to be inflamed or in dede in flames breake out of the earth go vp, by an ayre that is colde and moyste and grosse, euen as of a grene peace of woode the flames appeare to be more red. Peraduenture some beyng persuaded by these philosophicall reasons, wyll thynk this our wonderous or strange token (or bloodye colour or fyre they wyll name it rather a flame or celesti all burnyng) vtterly to be a naturall thyng, and such as the causes thereof maye be sufficientlye gathered out of the very bosome of nature: and to betoken nothyng els but peraduenture some naturall effect: as some mutation of the ayre and of the constitution and course of the yere: or some pestilence at hand or immediatlye folowing: amonge the signes of the whych nature thei learned are wonte to put fyry speculations, as gapynges, burnynges, comets, shuttyng starres, &

other thynges that by nyght maye be perceyued in the ayre. For although in this tyme of the wynter vapours hoate and drie, and to be inflamed, ar not wont to breake out of the earth: notwithstanding (he sayth) it is to be thought that they beyng the longer shut in the earth with great frost, being the more abundantly gathered together, breake out at the length with more violence when the wayes be opened, and being raised vpon high in the hyghest ayre the heate beyng restrained by a repulsion and let, or els that that colour was made by the beames of the sonne then beyng neare to the risyng being either kindled or els only appearyng by reflirion and turning backe againe: and those whyte furrowes were beames of the Sunne brought in that part onely whereon the substance of the vapours being gathered together was thinne. For the beames of the Sunne appeare muche more in the high mountaines then in the lower places. Also as it is written in histories, thys hathe also happened in other places. And greate

bur-

burnings haue appeared for many va pours were gathered being long shut within the earth by the strength of colde, and chiefely in places of moun tains whose bellies and waies be for the most part full of such vapours.

These and suche lyke thinges per chaunce mē that are curious in philo sophie, or also vtterly godlesse, as E picure and suche other couetous per sons will put furth, and so persuade vs by this meane to feare nothynge.

The authour Cicero of diuination (sayeth) this only reason, by the opi nion and testimonie of the exposito?s of monstruous thynges auaileth a gainst all shewes monsters and won ders. If that whiche coulde neuer be done, be done, if it maye not be to be meruailed at. And so it to be no mon strous thing or wonder that may be done. But it was som great strēgth whych opened the shuttynge of the earth, by it it may appeare. Because that in some places about midnight an earthquake went before: as cer tain watchmen did obserue it at Du rick, and certain other hard the sha

kyng of yron instruments and plats of glasse, other saw gapyng in maner of pittes, and the dai before the earth opened neare vnto Tubinga. So thei do iudge that are induced with mans wisdome. But we out of the holye scriptures, and out of the treasure of the eternall and diuine wisdom, and out of the trew mouth of our lord, say that such wonders be sent from god, god doyng it other aboue nature, or contrary to nature, or els vsyng naturall thynges to the signifiyng of hys wyl, we saye and do beleue it, also histories do witnes, that alwayes great calamities haue folowed after suche wonders.

Out of the booke of Iulius, of prodegies or wonders: made. 505. yere after the makyng of the cytye.

T. Gracco M. Iuuentio Coss. amõg other wonders that he rehearseth, sayth: that the forme of two Sunnes were sene in the day, the ayre burned there was often lightnynge, storme and tempest.

P. Scipio Nasica Cn. Martio Coss. it is red, that the ayre in the nyght burned

burned, and much lightning fell.

P. Affrican and Lelio Coſſ. ryuers of blood ſlowed out of the earth, and in the night ỹ aire was ſene to burne A ſtar dyd burne by the ſpace of two and thyrtye dayes.

C. Cecilio Cn. Papyrio Coſſ. in the night the mount of Albane was ſene to burne, houſes burnte with lightning and tokens out of heauen. The lande of Lucenſis gaped abroade. In Fraunce the aire was ſene to burne. The Danes and the Dutchmen paſſed the Alpes, brake the league and made murder of the romaynes and theyr felowes.

C. Lelio. L. Domitius Coſſ. among otherr prodigies or wonders whiche he rehearſeth ſaieth: In Italy a burnyng torch appeared in the ayre, and all the aire was ſene to burne.

L. Martio, S. Julio Coſſ. in ỹ lande of Anaria the earth opened ⁊ a flame aroſe vp, ⁊ dyd ſhene in the element. About the land of Rhegium, parte of the Citie that is towardes the Sea was ouerthrowne wyth an yearthquake.

Seneca in hys fyrſt booke of naturall queſtions and.xv.chapter deſcribeth a wonder or ſtrange thyng like vnto ours.

AMonge the lightnings (ſayeth he) whiche the Grekes call Sela, maye put that fyre that was in the ayre, & we haue red it often times in hiſtories, the which burnyng was ſo high that ſometimes it was ſene amonge the ſtarres, and ſometymes ſo lowe, that it ſemed ſome fire a far of. A company of men of war vnder Tiberius the emperour (beyng amaſed when the aire for the moſt part of the night did burne) ranne to Colone for ſuccour, the fyre not beynge cleare but groſſe and ſmokye. Of theſe lightenyngs no man douteth but they haue a flame which they ſhewe, it is a certaine ſubſtaunce of them. But in the former lightnings was a bow and a crowne of ſome certaine ſubſtaunce, but it pleaſed vs not. &c.

Out of the booke of Polidor Virgill of wonders and ſtrange thynges.

In

IN the yere of our ſaluacion. C. xii. a burnyng lyght in maner of a towre wyth great bryghtnes was ſene to fall out of the ayre: when Jeruſalem was taken of the Turkes.

Wonders or ſtrange thynges taken out of the reherſal of M. Frytſchy of Laubany.

IN the yere of oure Lorde. M. C. xl. the aire was ſene to bourne oftentymes, and many ſtarres were ſene to fall from out of the ſkye into the earht. Burning lightes, fyry dartes, and flyinge fires, were often tymes ſene in the aire. Newe ſtarres were ſene. Celeſtial fires aroſe mani wais. There was ſene in the ayre a bryghte fyre, a company of horſemen and fote men to fight together, and cities, and ſwordes, and bloody wapours, were alſo ſene. &c.

In the yere. M. C. and. xx. There was ſene in the aire bloody cloudes, a croſſe, and a whyte man. Euen at ỹ time men thought a deſtruction ſhuld come vpon ỹ whole world. It is writ ten in Chronicles, that ſuche ſtrange things doe ſignifie ciuill warres.

Of those thynges whych folowed, you may reade at length in ỹ Chronicles of Boem, set furth by Auentyne in the leafe. D. C. xv.

In the yere. M. CCC. lxxv. the aire was sene to burne all night.

In the. M. D. L. three fyre globes wer sene in the aire in ỹ night in Misnia Lipsia, which certaine students & famous men did beholde.

The yere M. D. L. J. the xxviii. day of January at Ulisbon in Portingal were sene in the aire bloody roddes, and horrible fyres, & it rayned bloode also. Furthermore there was such an earthquake that two hundred houses were terriblie shaken and throwen downe in ỹ which shaking more then a thousand men perished.

The yere. M. D. L. JJJJ. the first day of February at Cathalane a citie of Fraunce, after the musteringe of the hoste whiche the kyng of France had commaunded to be done in that place, a wonderful strange sight was sene about the Moone. For a greate fire arose from the East part, & went to the west. And the Moone semed in maner

maner of a mighty great fire brande. The flame of thys fyre raged wyth great noyse, often castyng oute blasyng sparkes in the ayre, none otherwyse then when a smith beateth vpō hoat iron: thus saith Fritschius. Aristotle nameth such fyre a goat.

The answere of a godly learned frende vnto the aforesayde letter or Epistle.

Thy letters. W. C. were giuen vnto me with the boke of wonders. For the which your gentlenes I geue you moste heartye thankes. At your departure you dyd declare all thinges abundantly and very plainly. In the meane tyme I praye God that for his mercy sake he wyll turne al things to ỹ best. For to styre you vp, I haue added many things which you shall here reade.

The signification of the straunge wonder.

As all men doe confesse wyth one mouth, this vnaccustomed strāge wonder to signifie som great euil to these countreys: so I thinke ỹ causes of the sayde euyll, to be so neare

vnto vs, that it shall perse ẏ eies and mindes of all men. And seyng for the most part the calamities of mankind be sermons of repentance, although the common people through erroure do alledge many other causes of euils notwãdyng this fire of ẏ ayre is an euidẽt argumẽt & token of ẏ wrath of god, that without it be a few I think there is none so foolyshe or so mad, which vnderstandeth not that it is to come. We belene verely that we shal not be cast out of blisse, because it semeth that we shalbe so punyshed for oure sinnes: because that the crosse & aduersitie doth bryng alwayes more profit vnto the churche, then rest and slouthfulnesse. Of this commeth the common Prouerbe.

The bloode of the Martyrs watereth the Garden of the Lorde.

But although our enemies farre excede vs in all kynd of euyl, yet notwstanding we be not much inferior vnto them. Superfluitie is a profitable instrument & occasion, you wyll saye the moste parte of vs do want it, not superfluitie. Religion also on oure

part

parte is a lytle neglected & beginneth to be gainfull, no lesse truly then the Romains in time passed. For we shal finde but a few diuines whiche wyll vouchsafe to seke poore Christ in the cotage and stable. Manye of them couet fat benefices, for the whiche they serue none otherwyse then thei wold serue for ỹ sacrifice of the aultar. For that cause is there so much hatred, so much priuy backbiting which encreaseth dayly and hourly more & more, ỹ ther is none more deuided thē thei, in whō ought to be most loue & concord. These be the times which Eusebius setteth furth in the beginning of hys his eyghte booke vpon ecclesiasticall histories: who desireth any Diocesian whych may restore the weake mēbres vnto their health agayne.

God truely gouerneth hys church by fyre, the whiche name is called in scripture crosse and persecution, whych notwithstandyng as I hope shall not be longe, no more then this monsterous fire was longe, whyche lasted with vs no more then an houre, and that before day lyght. For the Psal-

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mographe compareth the furye of the vngodly lyke vnto fyre amongest the thornes, which maketh a feruent fire and when it appeareth to be most vehement, then soddenly it falleth and is tourned into ashes.

But although thys fyre wyth hys heated dyd inwrap the hyghest mountaines, therefore not onely the base states but also the highe monarches shall come to ruine: notwithstanding the stars whiche shone betwene, that is, the ministers of the churche shall not be put oute of their seate: which setting the worde of god before theyr face, shal shyne in darke night of persecution by the cleare light of the gospell vntyll the daye wished for ware bright, and the Sun of righteousnes shyne vpõ mẽ. But one star was sene to fall from heauen, which being drawen by ẏ fyre dyd furrow in the middest. It is to be thought, that one doctour or other, either for feare of the greate threatnyng, or els being drawen by hope of some promotion, shall be cast out of his degre. Therfore the Lord is to be praied vnto, that he wil

defende

defende vs standing in the confession of a sincere faith. For this cause it is good for all godly men to thinke that the scourge of the lorde is afore their dores: whome notwithstanding they by the mouyng of chaunces shall get, god onely knoweth which ruleth the causes of all thinges. We wyll onely bryng those thyngs which be like the truth, and seme not disagreable from the worde of God. For the worde of the lord ought to be a lantarne to our feete, and a light to oure steppes. By it we may learn better ỹ cause of our aduersities, then may be perceiued by any such wonders, which god sendeth commonly for the reprobate and stiffe necked men, amongest whome the worde of God taketh no place, that all their excuses may be cut awaye. Notwithstanding I do not deny that there be Sermons of repentaunce, whych not wythstandynge they that are destitut of the gouernment of the word of god do take neuer the latter. For we see vngodly and wycked men whych beyng associat with ỹ vnbeleuynge Iewes, require a sygne from heauen,

heauen, which if it apeare, then with full voyce they crye out, oure synnes require such wonders: but they of the part of the euangelicall doctrine, doe beare these thinges pacientlye and deriue part from them selues to other, and euery one that speaketh of repentance with the mouth, seldom doth it in dede. The only Christians in whō the light of the worde of god shyneth knowledge their synnes, and by the helpe of god studieth to reforme their lyfe to a better state, whome in these presente calamities this one thing can comfort them, that they vnderstande god by his syngular grace to tourne theyr deserued paynes into martyrdome: through whiche is caused that they also comfort themselues, in whō is this gyfte of God, that not onelye they beleue in Christ, but also suffer for hys name sake. For although our synnes be greate, yet nothwythstandyng we shall not feele the furye of the chiefe enemyes of Christ, but for the sincere confession of the faythe, whych we maye declyne from yf we wyll go from the doctrine of the gos-

pell

pell. The almightye and greate God for his diuine grace, and singuler aids of the holy gost, vouchsafe to kepe vs Amen.

The authour answereth againe to thys fyrste epistle: and approueth it, notwythstandyng (sayth he) the stars whiche fell out of that fyrye wonder, I had rather interpretate to signifie the aduersarye of Christe with hys, which as hitherto haue bene counted as starres, and shal fall headlong out of heauen as Lucifer dyd. &c. That is they shall fall from that vsurped authoritie which they now haue, which the authour of all wonders and effectes grant. So be it.

Certayn Eglogs taken out of diuers epistles of credible men, and certayne prynted bookes, prynted at Norynberghe and Vinaria, briefly set forth vpon the same wonder: so that it doth agre wyth those epistles or letters set oute afore, whych were almost omitted.

That mōsterous fyre was not sene at August, Vindelicorū, nor near about it, but it was sene not far from August: as about Neurzā, Landsper-

gen,

gen, Norinberg, and in the dukedom of Wirtenberge, in Belgicke, and also towarde Hungarye, within three dayes after Christenmas, but not in all these places on one daye: So that many of the neyghbors thought that it dyd burne, and ranne to quench it: and the fyre fallynge from heauen in another place made them sore afraid: This did a certayne noble man write in his epistle or letter. We read in a printed leafe that this fyre was sene towarde Ecclshemy, Frochhemy, & Bamberge: likewyse at Campodune and in many other places. And a credeble man wrote vnto vs that it was sene in the region of Ulme and in Athesina: Lykewyse at Lindauia, and in the monarchie of Bauaria, neare vnto Auguste (notwithstandynge it was not sene in the citie of Auguste) also towarde Uienna, and about Anwarpe. In the booke printed at Uinaria, we read that thys strange wonder was sene, the ayre beyng cleare & no cloudes at all, so that it occupied ỹ fourth parte of the heauen wyth such brightnes that one might easely see and perceyue

ceyue anye thynge. For the fire was great brode and longe (in maner as if some great citie had ben wholly al of fyre) discouered w̄ thre white strakes or furrowes of the which the one part appeared of the colour of bloode tempered with some other thing, and the other part was somewhat thicker, & the last part at the goyng away of it, it was compassed about with a darke and thicke cloude. Other sayde that the white strakes were sene at the beginninge wyth the fire, not beyng berye red aboute the middest, but a certaine clearnes mirte with rednesse, through which also the starres appeared. In some places warning was geuen by ringyng of ỹ belles to quench the fire. The forsayde fyre, as farre as men coulde iudge, remoued from the East vnto the West: other write that it began from the North in maner of a cloud: and it semed as it wer castyng flames of fyre from it like vnto starres. At the first it was sene thre dayes and a halfe, at the last an houre and a halfe afore daye, it lasted about an houre and an halfe, and vanished

away almost an houre afore dai. Out of letters written from Constance to vs. The nexte day after Childermas day in the ayre were sene certaine great and longe speares: two crosses the one of them was whyte, what the other was it is not shewed, and a rodde was sene in the ayre in maner of red bloode, so that some were readye to crie fyre. Certaine fishermen that were on the riuer aboute two of the clocke after midnight dyd see this great and bygght monstrous thynge whiche continued vntil fyre a clocke, but towarde Turgauia and Heluitia was sene a starre wyth fyue seuerall beames whiche were about three yards longe, & in other places it semed in maner of a Hunters staffe.

The report goeth, that aboute Koteuilla a certayne heate was hearde in the ayre, euen as it had bene liquor boylynge in a potte, the which by and by wente downe into the nexte hyll, and there wythin a whyle after it made the same noyse in the earth that it dyd before in the ayre. And as the letters doe testifie, whiche were

sent

ſent from Memminga.

On Childermas daye betweene fiue and ſyxe of the clocke in the mor-nynge, moore then the ſpace of an whole houre, was ſene in the ayre a great and an vnaccuſtomed rednes, towarde the north: in maner lyke vn to the faſhion of an hemicycle and then it remoued ſomewhat towarde the Southe, and bare before it the lykenes of burnyng fyre, by reaſon whereof in certayn villages the bels were ronge to gyue warning, to help to quenche it.

In another part of this rednes appeared whyte forrowes: the whyche by and by went out of ſyght lyke vnto red fiery flames, ſo that they were ſene ſhynyng by reaſon of the brightnes of the flame.

Another parte of it was diſcolored and al red in maner of bloode, and terrible of ſyght. The aire at firſt was not perceyued, and through this rednes the ſtarres were ſene to caſt out their beames. A mã that watched in a towre at Huricke, ſaide that about midnight he felt an earthquake.

And a certain crafts man which was a glasier marueyled at the sodden shakings of the glasse in ỹ night, where of I marualle that it was noted of none other, nor sene any where elles that we can heare. Mute of another epistle written by a certaine learned man. This wonder of the fyre in the ayre was not sene at Berne, but in ỹ fielde there were many that sawe it. I heare of nothynge that was sene beyonde Berne towarde Fraunce, nor at Friburge, nor at Lausanne. They do shewe of a certaine monsterous thing sene in the fielde of Berne there appeared a fyry globe in the whiche a beare and a lyon semed to fighte together. In the dominion of Gruenensis they write that a globe of fire did flye so nere a vyllage, that a husbande man was a frayed of the burnyng of his house, because the fire was sene so neare vnto the top of the house. These thynges I wryte by report to satisfie your request vntyll I knowe them more certainely. Thus sayde he.

Another writeth that in the fielde

of

of Berne was sene another wonder of an hoste of men fyghtyng together but the authour I know not.

Also after thys foresayde wonder of fyre that was sene in the aire, that is the thyrty day of December, which was the last yere. M. D. LX. at eyght a clocke before none, there was sene a fyre to aryse about Bade of Helue-tia with a great thicke cloude.

And when the husbande men of Re-gensburge (which towne is in ꝯ field of Surick) saw it thei ran together be ing ready to quench it: by and by it va nished away, so that it was not per-ceyued whether any fyre had ben in that place or no. Not withstandyng, this also may be thought to be a cer-taine wonder.

¶ The interpretation of the strang won der, set furth by the authour, written vn to a frende of his dwellyng in Vinde-lick a countrey of Germany.

I Geue you moste hearty thankes, that you do part amongest vs your interpretation vpon that fearefull and monsterous syghte, whyche you

did not onely se in the aire at Helue-
tia and Kanie, but at Algea and tho-
rough out all Sucuia, excepte at Au-
spurge, in which no man, no not the
watche men, did see any thing that
daye, when not withstandyng it was
sene two or three mile of, and the good
neyghbours there thought Auspurge
dyd burne, and they did lamentablye
beholde the dukedom of Wirtenberg
Franconia & Thuringa, at the same
houre and moment when ye did se it.
I haue no naturall philosophie that
thereby I might coniecture it to com,
for in such a dead and cold tyme there
coulde not happen such vapours nor
such erhalations, that mighte cause
such fyre to appear euery where: nor
yet was the cause of the earthquake
knowen amonge you, seing it was
heard to be no where els. Therefore
I come to your interpretacion: and I
hope that Christ wyll come shortly &
reuenge his worde. & iudge the world
by fyre: wythout you had rather thus
to expounde it, that in all places
wher this fyre was sene, the fire of ỹ
gospel shal so purely cleanse the peo-
ple

ple that all ſparkes and aſhes ſhalbe blowen quite away. But at Bauar and Auſtria where this fire did not appeare, they ſhall peryſhe in darkeneſſe, excepte God be mercifull vnto them.

Of certayne other ſtraunge tokens and wonders.

THe day before the fyre was ſene in the ayre, that is the ſeuen and twenty day of December, in the ende of the yere. M. D. LX. betweene the towne of Tubinga and the dukedome of Wirtenberge and the village of Jeſingam, which is two miles diſtant from Tubinga, ſoddenly in a certaine fielde there appeared a golfe which was fire and thirty fote depe, twenty fote broad. and about ỹ earth no more then a common pitte, round of compas, cõteinyng of depth in water nine fote. Other ſpreade falſe rumors abrode ſ ſay that it was of ſuch a depth that it could not be erpreſſed. Alſo it is ſayde, that it rained bloode about the ſame time in many places of Germanye.

The thirtene day of December, the yeare. M. D. LX. at Vienna and Auſtria, there was an earthquake and a great tempeſt, and fearefull lightenyng. Towres, houſes, and the Cathedral church of Sainct Steuen was burnte with lightenynge. The ayre was ſene burne a longe tyme, as a certayne noble man of Vindelicke in his letters doeth witnes vnto vs.

We knowe for a ſuertye that lately in Fraunce, when the king had aſſembled ỹ head men of a citi together into hys owne preſence: behold there appeared a great comet ouer the city which continued as long as ỹ aſſemblie endured: that is. xxviii. dayes, in the yeare. M. D. LX. in the moneth of December.

Of wonders or ſtrange thyngs ſene in the countrey of Pymont. Taken out of the letters written to a certain prince in the yeare. 1560. in the moneth of December.

AT Chiraſyn a fyre was ſene in ỹ aire which laſted thre houres. At Trauil-

Trauilla it rayned bloode as manys houres, that is to wit, thre hōures. At Fosan were sene as it were, thre fyry cometes. In the plaine nert vnto Sentaly there appeared a great numbre of horsemen in the ayre. At Caragnan ther was sene an earthquake which sounded lyke the wheles of a waggon. At Pinaroly was sene in ỹ aire the maner of a fyry linnen cloth: and many other strang wonders wer sene in sundrie other places.

Of the heauenly goat (for so Aristotle calleth it) there was sene at Cathaline, a notable towne of Fraunce commonly called Cholos, in the yere of our lorde. M. D. L. IIII. the fyrte day of the moneth of Marche, betwen seuen and eyght of the clocke at after none, aboute the Moone a burnynge fyre, in the which was sene, as it had bene the poynt of a speare, going frō the East vnto ỹ West, & castyng out flames and fearful great burnynges. As Conrade Lycosthenes writteth in his boke of monsterous and straunge wonders.

Of ſtraunge wonders and prodegious thynges, ſene in the ayre in the begynnyng of the yere. 1556.

IN the begynnynge of the yeare of our Lorde, a thouſande, fyue hundred ſixtye and fyre: On a Mondaye after Chriſtenmas day about the euenynge tyde, was ſene with vs that dwell about Lauinga (as a certayne contre man of ours writ in a letter to a frende of hys) a great lyghtnyng and it thundered exceadinglye, and not farre of from vs, a houſe ſtandyng in a village was ſtrycken with lyghtnyng and burnte downe.

And the ayre opened verye wyde and brode, and dyd belche oute great and bright flames of fyre. The whiche tempeſt was about nyne of the clock at nyght, manye of the people were wonderfully aſtonied and ſore afrayd in ſo muche that many of them were domme a longe tyme after.

Out of another Epiſtle or letter of the ſame wonder: the ſame daye at nyght in Bohem, Sileſia, and Miſnia, there was a terrible tempeſt,

and

and many men, cattell, great towres and churches wer stricken with lightnyng and perished with fyre. Also it rayned bloode and fyre. A towne of Meinicca foure myles distant from Praga, all the grounde of it was wel nigh consumed with fire. The church of our Lady at Praga was burnte with lightnyng: and the church of S. Anne that is in the mount was lyke wise burned. Two Churches beyng about two mile distant from Lipsia, were also burnt with lightning. And it rained blood abundantly in ỹ same place: and two camelles were sene in the ayre deuouring a harnessed man.

In the same yere. M. D. L. VI. the eleuenth day of January, at August and Vindelick towarde the Alpes, in the night the air opened, and burned for a while most fearefull to beholde, and semed to threaten to be the latter day. At Wiccenhusa in Bauaria, ther was sene in ỹ night such brightnes, that ỹ candle light in Feta ward darke, and when the candles were put out, the brightnes of theaire sufficed the for light, three houres space.

The

The same yere of our lorde a thou-
sand fyue hundred and thre score, the
fyfth day of September in the towne
of Marchia and Custerine, at nyne a
clocke at after noone. Innumerable
flames of fyre dyd shyne on euery side
in the aire w̄ great brightnes. And in
the myddes of the element there ap-
peared two fyry beames. To cōclude,
as I read moreouer, in an vnknowen
author, a voyce was heard which said
woe, woe, vnto the churche. Thus
sayeth James Fincelius, wri-
tyng of the wonders
done in hys
tyme

Of certaine vvon-derfvll stravnge visions and merueylous tokens.

¶ Out of the Prolongue of Joachim Camerary of Pabe, in the Chronicle of Nicephorus, translated by him into Latine and erpounded, which boke was printed at Basill by John Oporinus.

After that I chaunsed to liue in that tyme in the whiche the common wealth hangeth either in miserable ruine, either in pernicious alteracion, or els in very vehement and troublesome affayres. Trulye (good reader) I can not heartely reioyce, nor inwardly be merye, wyth any ryches or honour that is coueted or desired in the publik weale. For I pray you what is done or attempted almoste in any place, that pertaineth not vnto ỳ decay of ỳ comon wealth: What obstinacie is in men: What malyce and hatred: What couetousnes and gredy gathering: What de-

sire

desyre of reuengement: What ambitious lust to rule? Not withstanding these things be couered, and do cloke them selues vnder moste honeste names, as constancie, magnanimitie or valiaunt corage, seueritie, and dignitie or honour. And by the law of God and man, many are compelled to obei theyr malice. Amonges these thyngs nothyng almost is done by deliberat counsell, and neither is any paynes taken in prouidyng and lokyng diligently to things of importance, neyther any chaungyng of sentence or any correction for vice. All thinges be lawfull to them that be in authoritie and are mightye. Holye thynges are made vnholye: publycke thynges are made priuate: peace is tourned into stryfe: so that there is no order set in thinges. Euery state, and degree, and condicion, is geuen ouer to mocking and disdeyning. Deadly hatred is exercised in euery place: to the fulfilling of the which hatred helpe is sone called from euery syde. They do practise crueltie and tyrranny lyke vnto the brutishe Barbarians. The which being

ing of them selues moste filthye and vile, doe all thynges contrarye to the lawes and ordinaunces of the elders: the common wealth which the good men left vnto their posteritie, among these, muste of necessitie perysshe and vtterly decaye. But although the situation of the starres, and manye straunge and monsterous things doe foreshewe and warne vs of this: not wythstandyng the moste euident tokens of the mutations of the former causes, by the whyche may lawfully be taken moste certayne coniectures of that which is to com. Which to declare in a few wordes shall not be (as I thynke) disagreable to the matter. And the foretellings of astrologie, of the mouing of starres, of the eclipsis and coniunction of the Sun & moone and of the flames of the comets, be almost knowen vnto euery man: other wonders also for their oftenes do the lesse moue mens mindes. But what visions haue bene sene aswell by thé that waked as them that slept (enterpretated by sothsaiers) it wer to long to declare or rather infinite.

One

One thynge I doe remember well, (if a mā may lawfully speake on this fashion) I did se in my dreame one holy and heauenly likenes or picure. A certayne good and godly man dyd see with in these fewe yeres in a vision (as it semed vnto hym) a great armye of men dyd skermishe and fyghte together, and were ready with theyr weapons in their handes to fyre villags, townes, & cities, and to waste & destroye the fieldes: manye men fell down: yet not wythstandyng it could not be perceyued who had the victory Also this battel was so intermeddled that it coulde not clearely be sene of whome it was done nor agaynste whome. In one place also he beheldе, and sawe fyue writynges or scriptures, of fyue distincte and chaungeable coloures, in ỹ whiche was shewed diuers names & diuers sentēces, which were sene in ỹ aire after this maner.

Blacke for the Iewes, and Moses lawe. Whyte for the Christians and onely fayth of Christe. Yelowe of the pardons of the byshop of Rome. Red for the Turkes, Saracenes, Mahometh

hometh the messanger of onely God. Yelowishe, for the worckes and liberties of the Anabaptists. What these thynges do signifie can not be hyd to any man that wyll studye to knowe what shal happen wythin these fewe yeres, and what is nowe done.

Aboute the same tyme, the maner of a longe history was sene in the cloudes: whiche afterwarde was set furth in a picture, drawen out and published at Welgicke, in thys maner hereafter folowyng.

There appeared an armed man on horsebacke wyth a speare charged in his hande, and readye for to runne a course. And besydes thys, was sene the lykenesse of the Emperour Charles the fyfth, with a crowne vpon his heade: and neare vnto it a hogges snoute, somwhat hygher there was sene two Lyons rampynge and leaping agaynst thre other Lions: and a lytle beneth them, two great Dragons spuyng out flames of fyre.

And after thys was sene great armies of men of warre, aswell by sea as by lande, and euerye where was

cruell burning of townes and castels and villages. And ther was also sene in the ayre a Pecocke wythout feete hauyng no wynges: and neare vnto hym there was a Dragon. Also in the same place was an Egle hauyng the greatest parte of hym hyd behynde a banke: and aboute the banke was a lytle Egle. Lykewise was sene a Lion crowned lying on hys backe, whō a Cocke dyd stryeke on the throte.

After this there were gathered together many and diuers beastes, wyth horrible formes and shapes: and all monsterous beasts, except the wylde Unicorne which the Grekes doe call Monoceros, and a verye fayre and great huge Elephant. By and by another armye of men appeared agayne burnyng and destroying: and a Cocke defendyng hym selfe agaynst a Lyon whose head was semed to be cut of.

And laste of all, there was sene a great lake, in the whych were drowned (as they doe declare) townes, and great Churches, theyr steples beyng sene to appeare aboue the water: and a Camell was sene alone vpon the banke

bancke, with his head in ỹ lake drynkynge. Wonderfull many flamyng Dragons were sene, breathynge out flames of fyre and much venym euery where.

Unto me truly these thynges seme not vnpossible to chaunce, specially and chiefly to those people whyche doe trouble and molest the worlde in this oure age, with great vexations and sore afflictions.

Furthermore, it is declared vnto vs, that thys yere there are very manye monsterous byrthes, bothe of mankynde, and also of many and diuers other kyndes of beastes.

Amonge the which, was the notable great Monkecalfe (that is a calfe like a Monke) and before hym an Asse, a man, and a fishe, of mixed formes and diuers shapes. And after that there came furth another monster whiche was a fyshe lyke a Monke.

For in the bowels of the man was founde iron (as we haue often tymes proued it trew) what doth that signifie but inwarde commocion or ciuill hatred or stryfe:

Therefore these thynges shewyng them selues so often tymes, and so wonderfull, verely we ought to vnderstande and to thynke, that the moūing and worckyng of nature is wasted out of frame, and the state and condicion of men to be tourned out of course, & that the effectes of nature being weake & sicke may no longer continue nor endure: for euen as monstrous byrthes doe not lyue longe, so likewyse the degenerate and monstrous state of thys corrupt world shall not laste longe.

As I doe remembre (and as I sayd before to certayne men whiche tolde me, that a mayde at Rhenie lyued wythout meate and drynke) I dyd tel thē how that she could not lyue long nor continue without foode: as if one shoulde saye, it were a wonderfull and a merueylous thyng tō be done, yf that common wealthe shoulde not decaye and perysshe, where the rulers (which ought onely to norisshe and to vpholde the same) eyther be not able to gouerne it, or elles be farre absent and a great way from it.

But

But we see most manifest signes and euident tokens of forewarnyng. For as by the rysyng and the goyng downe of the Sunne, we knowe the commyng of the day & the nyght. So in lyke maner I doe suppose, that after the breakyng vp and dissolvynge of the lawe and discipline of the christian common wealth, some great fall and destruction muste of necessitie folow, and after lyke sort we maye coniecture other ieoperdyes and daungers for to come.

¶ To God be all honor and glory, for these and all other his wonderful workes, declared and shewed vnto vs. So be it.

PSALME. 19.

The heauens declare the glory of God, and the fyrmament sheweth the worke of hys hand.

Imprynted at Lon
don by Roulande
Hall dvvellynge in
Goldynge Lane at
the ſigne of the
three arro-
vves.
1561.